



Glebe Heights Forest Development Proposal Concerns & Discussion Points

The Neighbors of the Mayo Peninsula has reviewed the most recent development proposal (the fifth one!) in advance of a public meeting taking place via Zoom on Sept. 3. The developer wants to build 41 houses on 45.6 acres, all of which is currently forested (except for a small, historic family cemetery). Here are our major concerns and questions.

Peninsula Issues

1. Peninsula-wide development is a major concern, but Loch Haven in particular has been hit especially hard with developers clear cutting our forests since the building moratorium was lifted. This community has been unanimous and clear in its outspoken opposition to this development.
2. Anne Arundel's draft General Development Plan (Plan 2040) includes land use policy for peninsulas. These policies recognize the importance of natural resource conservation on peninsulas by recommending ONLY infill and redevelopment take place there — not the large-scale destruction of undeveloped land that helps prevent stormwater runoff and preserve habitats. Shouldn't we be trying to follow that guideline?
3. Surrounding property owners have had increasing damage to their homes due to the destruction of our natural environment by other developments such as Turnbull and Southpointe (water in basements, streams over backyards, no recourse with builder, etc.) Adding roofs, driveways, and roads for 41 more houses at the top of the hill will force more runoff downhill into these already beleaguered neighborhoods.

Stormwater Management

1. This is a very sensitive ecological site, containing significant nontidal wetlands, steep slopes, and critical buffer areas along Glebe Creek. All of these areas are sensitive and/or vulnerable to the impacts of stormwater runoff, and even more so if it is poorly managed.
2. Clearing 14.56 acres of forest (if we trust that calculation) and adding impervious roads and roofs will significantly add to our existing Storm Water / flooding problems.
3. This increased runoff will increase pollutants into our South River and Chesapeake Bay
4. The \$600,000 oyster replenishment project in Glebe Bay will be damaged by surface contaminations from sediment and stormwater runoff.
5. How will this project impact the county's ability to meet its required share of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup goals? The developer should be required to document and demonstrate how much additional stormwater runoff result will affect Glebe Bay in terms of nutrient and sediment pollution.

Roads/Congestion

1. Peninsula roads are already overloaded. Recent studies show that the Loch Haven/214 intersection is failing, and this development will make it worse. Intersection of Muddy Creek and 214 is also failing.
2. Traffic on Loch Haven Road increased when Southpointe's 39 homes were developed. It will increase again when Turnbull's 11 come on line, and it will be doubled again if the Glebe Heights Forest is developed.
3. The estimated baseline traffic impact has gone down from the last proposal to this one. How can that be explained?

Age Restrictions?

1. With this revised proposal, the developer is suddenly saying he will make this an age-restricted community: owners must be 55 years or older.

2. This is purely a strategy to avoid compliance with county requirements — APFOs — that would force the developer to address school and road capacity in the area. For example, Central Middle school is closed, requiring Office of Planning and Zoning to deny new developments that would add more students.
3. There are loopholes in the county code. Homeowners can vote to reverse the age-restriction on their community. It's almost impossible to enforce age restrictions in situation where grandparents have children and grandchildren live with them or use their addresses to attend local schools.

Forest Conservation

1. This land is within a designated Greenway, Targeted Ecological Area Priority Preservation Area — including a state recognition as a Priority 1 Forest. The county should do everything possible to protect it from being developed.
2. Double-dipping: The revised plan now appears to claim credit for preserving land on a neighboring parcel owned by the developer, but most of the land this refers to is already accounted for as conservation acres for the development of Turnbull Estates! How is this consistent with the county's Forest Act requirements? The developer and the county should explain!
3. Critical calculations for forest conservation have been inconsistent and conflicting throughout this process, and this time is no different. For example: the proposal still bases important area calculations on 74.02 acres and 55 units but the forest conservation worksheet uses 45.59 acres and 41 units; the previous submission said they would clear more than 23.5 acres to build 42 houses and this submission says 14.5 acres for 41 houses... a 63% reduction - how is that possible? How do we know that which numbers are right, and that they won't change again?
4. On a fully-forested parcel like this one, it's odd that not one of the specimen trees (large, valued trees) identified in this proposal are located within the 14.56 acres that would be cleared. The specimen tree inventory (most recent Forest Delineation report) should be made public and verified.
5. If road and school improvements will be required to support this community, then information about trees and other environmental features of the property should definitely be made public. That has not happened to date. These services partly depend on public financial investments and costs to the environment are born by the public as well.

Wildlife

1. The Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership documented 5 species of Greatest Conservation Need, 7 Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) and 11 Long Distance Migrant species that make up almost 50% of the bird population. The loss of this forested 14.56 acres in a Greenway will greatly impact their survival.
2. The property should be surveyed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure there are no threatened or endangered species of flora and fauna on the property and the results should be made available to the public.
3. The habitat for deer, fox, raccoon, opossum, eagles and many other animals is in jeopardy.
4. Wildlife & traffic: Developing this greenway is certain to impact the wildlife that use the corridor between Glebe Bay and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, cutting off their migratory route between properties and likely increasing the risk of conflicts/collisions on 214 and Muddy Creek Road between the two properties. How does the traffic study account for this increased risk to vehicular traffic and the safety of vehicle occupants?

More Unanswered Questions

We were initially unaware of several pieces to the developer's proposal that were distributed to various offices in the county. We don't believe we have them all and, as citizens, we have not had enough time to put in the needed requests and review these documents. We need the complete package of documents, and we should be given enough time to review them, followed by another public hearing to allow citizens to ask questions about them.